

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
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Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce
H.R. 3, the Northern Route Approval Act
May 22, 2013

Today, the House Republicans are making the fourth attempt in two years to grant special treatment to TransCanada's Keystone XL tar sands pipeline. That's what happens when you let the oil companies set the agenda.

Rather than tackling the real problems facing American families, we're passing legislation to exempt a foreign company from the rules that every other company in America has to follow. And of course last week, we voted for the thirty-seventh time to repeal the Affordable Care Act. We're trampling our rule of law to speed Canada's dirty tar sands oil to the Gulf, where it can be refined and sent to other countries tax-free. That's great for tar sands developers and refiners, like the Koch brothers and Valero.

But this bill will hurt American families. It won't lower gas prices by a single penny; it may even raise them. It will lock us into more global warming and risk our farmlands and our water supplies.

No wonder Americans are cynical about Congress.

I oppose the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline because it will worsen climate change.

Keystone XL will lock the United States into decades of dependence on dirtier tar sands crude, reversing the carbon pollution reductions we have been working so hard to accomplish. Experts tell us that building Keystone XL will triple production of the tar sands. And that's simply not consistent with any future scenario for avoiding catastrophic climate change.

We don't need it. We have our own sources of oil here in the United States. And we're using less oil because of our efficiency in new cars that are getting better mileage.

I oppose this bill for these reasons. But even if you support the pipeline, you should oppose this bill.

H.R. 3 is an extreme bill. It grants a regulatory earmark to TransCanada, exempting it from all environmental requirements.

H.R. 3 is also unnecessary. The State Department is carrying out their review of this highly controversial project.

H.R. 3 would approve the pipeline by fiat, lock out the public, eliminate the President's authority to balance competing interests, and stop federal agencies from ensuring that if the project does go forward, we do it as safely as possible.

The Keystone XL tar sands pipeline is a bad deal for America. We get all the risks, while the oil companies reap the rewards. But even if you support it, this bill is harmful and unnecessary. I urge my colleagues to vote no on H.R. 3.